## STONIEDI

### TUME TO BE PETERIAL D



GAVIN BASTIENSZ

A new drug, "Dryad Dust", has hit the streets and it's causing havoc.



#### **CREDITS**

**Designer:** Gavin Bastiensz

**Template:** Simple Microsoft Word Template by Laura

Hirsbrunner

**Cover Illustrator:** See note re: Cover Image below. **Gaming Group:** The Blackthorne Bridge Club (B2C)

#### **OTHER CREDITS**

Floor plans are drawn using the Dungeon Map Doodler is a program designed to easily create tabletop RPG maps created by Todd Ross (@ToddRossDIY).

Largescale maps created with Wonderdraft (https://www.wonderdraft.net/)



#### ON THE COVER

Woman sculpture. Original public domain image from The Minneapolis Institute of Art. Digitally enhanced by rawpixel. Passed through the Pencil Greyscale artistic effect in MS-PowerPoint.

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#### INTRODUCTION

#### BACKGROUND

This one -shot was originally written as an adjunct to the bespoke (homebrew) campaign world of Falls Gate. It was based on the regional capital of *Bilonard* and designed to be a one-shot for 4 to 6 players. The playthrough can be based in any big city in any setting the DM requires.

Please note that there are adult themes throughout this scenario and as such it is not suitable for children.

#### THE SCENARIO

The Scenario centers around a group of thieves (or adventurers) who are commissioned to help the city watch investigate the spate of drug related incidents in the city.

#### **PLAYING THE SCENADIO**

The Scenario is designed for 4 to 6 players starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level+. Due to the final (Boss) encounter, higher level characters would also be appropriate given the CR rating.

Based on our local gaming group (Blackthorne Bridge Club) the size of this scenario will occupy around 1 session of around 3 hours long.

#### **CHARACTERS & GROUPS**

If, like me, you struggle with names for NPCs during your sessions, I have listed a few here for ease of reference.

#### GENEDAL NDCS

If you need names for additional NPCs, please select from the following:

#### MALE

Grommash Hellscream Thorgrim Stonefist Gudrun Ironfist Ragnar Bloodaxe **Gunnar Ironside** Korgoth the Destroyer Balthazar the Brave Hrothgar the Mighty **Ulfgar Ironclad** Grimgor Ironhide Zephyr Stormfist Grimnir Skullcrusher Ulfrik Wolfborn Kethra Firemane Uthgar the Unstoppable Farkas the Fearless Torvald the Terrible Asher Nightshade Finnegan Shadowfoot Kaelen Darkblade Darian Lockhart Lucian Blackthorn Nikolas Nightingale

#### **FEMALE**

Elara Moonwhisper Lirien Starcaller Serafina Lightsworn Niamh Flameheart Anara Stormborn Thalia Radiancebearer Zara Nightshade Adira Bloodmoon Kaida Shadowborn Sariel Hellfire Seraphine Emberweaver Akasha Inferno Calliope Thornheart Nephthys Shadowcaster Elara Moonwhisper Lyra Fernweaver Niamh Wildheart Sariel Leafwhisper Thalia Stormcaller Ylva Forestborn Arineth Moonwater Calantha Woodwind Eira Treebloom **Gwyneth Thornvale** Eirlys Hammerstrike Greta Battleaxe Kelda Ironhelm Ragnhildr Bloodaxe Solveig Grimhammer Thora Steelheart

#### **ENCOUNTERS**

#### 4.1. THE SETUP

This is a preliminary encounter to set up the actual scenario.

You receive a cryptic message via some mutual acquaintances, the note simply says: "Meet me at the Leaf and Berry tonight, I have need of your group's particular skills. It will be lucrative" and it is signed "Cade".

You know this to be Captain Cade Ravenwood, captain of the city watch – these are usually interesting jobs.

Let the party decide what to do – but move them along to the evening and meeting at the Leaf and Berry, which they have been to before.

As you push open the heavy wooden door of the Leaf and Berry Inn, the sounds of lively conversation and raucous laughter spill out into the street. The warm glow of torchlight spills out onto the cobblestone path, casting flickering shadows across the entrance.

As your eyes adjust to the dimly lit interior, you take in the bustling scene before you. The tavern is spacious and well-appointed, with sturdy wooden tables and chairs scattered throughout the room. A large stone fireplace crackles merrily in one corner, casting a warm glow across the room.

The air is thick with the scent of roasting meat and spiced ale, and the sound of clinking glasses and clattering plates fills your ears. A group of bards are playing lively tunes in one corner, while a pair of grizzled old adventurers swap stories over a tankard of ale at the bar.

Despite the rowdy atmosphere, there's a sense of camaraderie and goodwill in the air. The patrons seem to be a mix of locals and travelers, all united by a shared love of good food, drink, and company.

Read the following when Cade arrives.

After taking your seats, a short time later, you see your contact walk in. Acknowledging a few of the patrons as he strides towards yourselves, he seems a mite more serious than usual.

Not beating around the bush, he commences. "I have need of your services I fear – there are some things that a watch commander nor guard can do I'm afraid.

"You may have heard, but we are in the middle of a major problem in the poorer areas of the city at the moment. It seems a drug called 'Dryad Dust' has hit the streets. Highly addictive, it causes hallucinations and violent behavior in the most demur of individuals. "We have tried tracing its origins and the dealers – but to no avail. Sadly we, even in disquise, seem to stand out too much.

"My offer is this – I need you to find the source of this scourge and, if possible, eliminate it – by any means necessary. I just don't want to know the details.

"I am up to my eyeballs dealing with the disappearance of a number of younger nobles in the last few weeks – I don't have the resources to cover both, and the nobles are directing my efforts elsewhere.

"In return, I have 100gp each up front and another 200gp each if you can bring this to a close. Are you interested?"

Let the players talk to the captain and roleplay as much as they want, when they have concluded their deal, he will add the following:

The best place to start is sadly with the victims of these crimes, one of the worst hit areas is the hive sector, and especially the region around Spider Lane – you can often find addicts sprawled across the alley, I suspect that they meet up with their dealers here.

Maybe follow one of them – surely, they will be able to lead you to a source or someone higher up the chain.

With that, he will pass them a pouch of 100gp each and walk out of the tavern.

#### 4.2. THE ADDICTS

Use this lead in description when the players get to Spider Lane.

You step into the medieval alley of stone, the walls towering high above you, casting the street below into shadow. The air is thick with the stench of rot and filth, and you feel your nose wrinkle in disgust. The ground beneath your feet is slick with grime, and the slick stones threaten to send you slipping at every step.

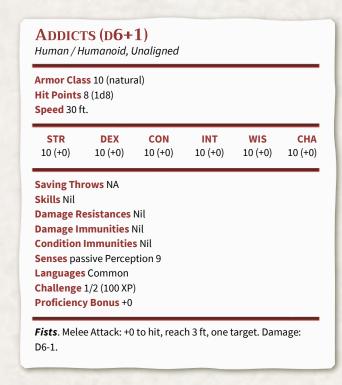
As you make your way down the alley, you notice a few figures slumped against the wall, their eyes glazed and unfocused. It's clear they've been drugged through the use of illicit substances, and you feel a pang of sadness for them. They're lost in their own world, unaware of the squalor around them.

You hear the distant sound of music and laughter, the tell-tale signs of revelry and debauchery. You realize that this alley is a hub for those seeking to escape reality, to lose themselves in a haze of pleasure and indulgence.

There will be d6+1 poor souls in the alley at any one time. Most of them will be malnourished and destitute, their reaction to someone other than a known dealer will be as follows:

Roll	Response
d6	
1	Will beg for money or food – quite insistent but will stop if threatened (or worse) with violence.
2	Will be in a drug induced stupor  – no reaction to the characters.
3	Will become aggressive and attempt to attack the character(s). Use stats below.
4	Will bark like a dog, try to run around on all fours and then run out of the alley.

Roll d6	Response
5	Will throw up on the character(s). After which – they will apologise and can engage with the character.
6	Coming down from the high, will be grumpy but able to talk with the characters.



Give the characters a while to deal with the residents of the alley before getting them to make a passive perception roll to see a man, dressed in leather armor and a cap, enter the alley.

They will see that the coherent denizens will rush towards him and try to offer him a coin for a small pouch of a dust like looking substance.

#### JACOB SHADOWHAND

Human, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 12 (Leather & Dex)

Hit Points 30 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

 STR
 DEX
 CON
 INT
 WIS
 CHA

 10 (+0)
 10 (+0)
 10 (+0)
 12 (+1)
 10 (+0)

**Saving Throws NA** 

**Skills** Nil

**Damage Resistances Nil** 

**Damage Immunities Nil** 

**Condition Immunities Nil** 

Senses passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus +1** 

**Dagger**. Melee Attack: +1 to hit, reach 3 ft, one target. Damage: 1d4+1

They can challenge him here or just follow him. If they follow him – he will lead them to his next meeting at the Boiled Potato. If they do capture / interrogate him, use the following information:

- He will not willingly divulge any information.
- If threatened / roughed up, he will say that he is a courier for a syndicate.
- He doesn't know where it comes from or where it is made.
- All his product and contacts come through an intermediary named: Astrid Stonefist
- He is due to meet Astrid after this at the Baked Potato Inn a short walk away.
- He was going to report back that he had sold all his goods and request some more – which she would procure from somewhere.

#### 4.3. THE BOILED POTATO

As you approach the tavern, you see the stonework of the building's facade, tall and imposing. The pitched roof, made of thatch and shingles, seems to loom above you as you take in the sight. The building is two stories tall, with small, diamond-shaped windows letting in only dim light.

As you step closer, the sounds of fights and music emanating from within grow louder. You can hear the clanging of swords and the thud of

fists against flesh, mixed with the sound of raucous laughter and the twang of a lute.

You step inside the dimly lit inn, the flickering light of lanterns casting eerie shadows on the walls. The air is thick with the smell of ale and smoke, and you feel a wave of warmth wash over you as you make your way inside.

The sounds of fighting and music are coming from a room to your left, and you see a few patrons gathered around, cheering on the combatants as they clash in a fierce battle. The room is filled with the sounds of metal on metal, and you can smell the sweat and exertion of the fighters as they struggle against one another.

As you make your way further into the inn, you see other patrons gathered around small tables, drinking ale and eating meat pies. The atmosphere is lively and boisterous, with the sound of laughter and conversation filling the air.

You notice the inn's proprietor, a grizzled man with a bald head and a bushy beard, standing behind the bar. He nods at you as you approach.

Depending upon whether the party followed **Jakob Shadowhand** or questioned him – they will either find him speaking to **Astrid Stonefist** at a table, or she will be pointed out by either Jakob or the bartender if asked.

An attractive but rough looking woman Astrid can take care of herself, and it shows. She wears studded leather armour, has at least 3 visible weapons and maybe even more not on show (sword sheathed, dagger at side, dagger in boot). She will be seated at a table with no one else if Jakob isn't with her.

With or without an interaction with Jakob, she will eventually drain her tankard and leave the tavern, heading for the river docks area of the city.

#### 4.4. THE DEALER

Following Astrid, she leads them down to the entrance to the market.

As you take a short walk along the cobbled streets towards the river, following Astrid, the sound of your footsteps echoes off the stone buildings surrounding you. The streetlamps flicker on, casting a warm glow on the uneven pavement beneath your feet.

As you approach the river, you come across an old retarding basin on the riverbanks. The water looks cold and murky, and you can feel a certain sense of foreboding emanating from the rusting iron gates that chain off an old tunnel leading into the darkness. You see Astrid open the gates and go through.

It is now dusk, and the shadows stretch out long and thin, making it difficult to see what lies beyond the tunnel's entrance. You can't help but feel a shiver run down your spine as you realize that you are alone in this eerie setting.

You can feel the cold metal against your skin as you reach out to push them open, and they groan loudly in protest as you force them apart. As you step through the gates and into the tunnel, the darkness envelopes you like a heavy blanket. Your eyes slowly adjust to the dim light, and you begin to make out shapes and shadows moving in the distance. Until the voices and sights resolve into an underground market.

#### 4.5. THE MARKET

Descending the tunnel, the sound of bustling activity grows louder and more intense. The air around you grows thick with the scent of sweat, grime, and illicit substances, as you make your way into the underground market held in an abandoned sewer with an arched roof.

The dimly lit space is vast, with stalls lining the walls and open spaces filled with a wide variety of people, from thieves and mercenaries to peddlers of black-market goods and services. The arched roof, crisscrossed with a network of pipes and other infrastructure, gives the space an eerie, cavernous feel, with the occasional drop of water splashing onto the ground. As you make your way deeper into the market, the sights and sounds grow more intense. Shouts

and haggling mix with the sounds of blades being sharpened and magic spells being cast.

The smells of cooking meats and spices mingle with the scents of smoke and sweat.

You see stalls selling everything from rare magical ingredients to illegal weapons and stolen goods. A crowd of gamblers gather around a makeshift table, while a group of mercenaries loiter nearby, exchanging whispered conversations. The sense of danger and excitement is palpable in the air, and you can't help but feel a sense of thrill and trepidation as you take it all in.

This underground market is a place of lawlessness and secrecy, where anything can be bought and sold for the right price.

The following stalls are available in the market – all will honor deals, but it is a volatile situation should things get out of hand.

**Weapons**: A stall selling weapons such as swords, crossbows. There are multiple such stalls for these.

"Procured" goods: A stall selling stolen items such as jewelry, artifacts, and other valuable objects. The stall owner is also a fence who buys stolen goods from thieves and then sells them to interested buyers.

**Drugs**: A stall selling illicit substances such as opium, hallucinogens, or other drugs that have been banned by the authorities. This is where the characters can find out about Dryad Dust.

**Poison**: A stall selling poisons that can be used for assassinations or other nefarious purposes.

Magic items: A stall selling magical items such as potions, scrolls, and enchanted items that are not widely available or legal to use. The following are available:

- Potion of Fire breath (150)
- Potion of Invisibility (200)
- Oil of slipperiness (200)
- Potion of speed (300)

- Bag of holding (500)
- Wand of Magic Missiles (1,000)
- Goggles of the night (2,000)
- Ring of swimming (2,000)
- Ring of jumping (3,000)
- Boots of speed (4,000)
- Potion of longevity (10,000) under the counter.

#### **MERCENARIES X 6**

Human, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 14 (Breast plate) Hit Points 30 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

 STR
 DEX
 CON
 INT
 WIS
 CHA

 10 (+0)
 10 (+0)
 10 (+0)
 12 (+1)
 10 (+0)

**Saving Throws NA** 

**Skills** Nil

**Damage Resistances Nil** 

**Damage Immunities Nil** 

**Condition Immunities Nil** 

Senses passive Perception 12

**Languages** Common

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus +1** 

Sword. Melee Attack: +1 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target.

**Mercenaries**: A stall offering the services of experienced fighters or assassins who can be hired for various criminal activities. Costs:

- Assassin (5,000 standard)
- Mercenaries (100 per day)

#### ASSASSIN

Human, Neutral Evil

Armor Class 15 (Studded Leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 +24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws DEX +6, INT +4

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +3, Perception +3, Stealth +9

**Damage Resistances** Poison

**Damage Immunities Nil** 

**Condition Immunities Nil** 

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Thieves' cant

**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus +3** 

**Assassinate.** During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit

**Evasion.** If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

**Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, the assassin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

*Multi attack*. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

**Shortsword**. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

*Light Crossbow.* Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Prostitution: A stall offering the services of prostitutes or sex slaves for the clients' pleasure. There will be one or more girls here (one human, one dwarf) as well as a male human as well.

**Information brokers**: A stall where people can go to gather information about their enemies or other people of interest.

**Forgery**: A stall selling fake documents, such as passports or identification papers, that can be used to fool the authorities.

**Gambling**: A stall offering various forms of illegal gambling, such as dice games, card games, or betting on animal fights. There are 2 tables set up here – one for card games and one for games of chance with dice.

After wandering the market for a while, Astrid will walk up to the drugs stall and start a conversation with the stall holder. If they listen to the conversation, they will hear that the stall holder has no more product and suggests that Astrid visit "Perry's" to get it directly from the source. She indicates that she will visit them tomorrow.

If they don't listen to the conversation, the seller can relate this information to them, but won't willingly – they will need to either kidnap him or do something similar to extract the location of the source.

They can also follow Astrid home. She has residences in the seedier side of town and will rest there and head out in the morning to Perry's.

They could also ask around and discover that Perry's is a stone workshop in the central quarter – often selling to the rich and famous of the city – they are known for their lifelike statues.

## 4.6. DERRY'S STONE WORKS

As you step into the stone paved courtyard of the stone works, you are greeted by a sight that takes your breath away. The space is filled with dozens of statues, some of people and others of animals, each crafted with incredible skill and attention to detail.

The statues are arranged in a way that seems almost haphazard, with some standing tall and proud in the center of the courtyard, while others are tucked away in corners, half-hidden by creeping vines and foliage.

As you approach the statues, you notice that many of them have strange looks upon their faces, some with wide eyes and gaping mouths, as if they were caught in a moment of surprise or shock. Others seem to be caught in moments of sorrow or rage, their expressions twisted and contorted in agony.

Despite the eerie expressions, the statues are breathtaking in their beauty, each one crafted with such precision and skill that they seem almost alive. You can't help but wonder about the people and creatures that inspired these works of art, imagining the stories and legends that must be attached to each one.

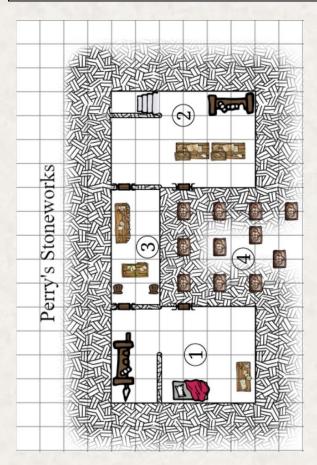
They will eventually be greeted by an assistant by the name of **Zara** that will try to help them and sell them something. She is unaware of the real purpose of the business and can yield no pertinent information to the characters.

With some persuasion, she will let the characters meet the "owner" – her boss, **Sven One-Eye**, who is working in the workshop itself.

You step into a dimly lit workshop, where the flickering glow of candles casts deep shadows across the rough-hewn stone walls. Amongst the clatter of chisels and hammers, you notice a bearded man with only one eye working diligently on a block of stone. His calloused hands grip the tools with practiced ease as he chips away at the stone with precise movements.

The man's beard is thick and unruly, a tangled mass of hair that obscures much of his face. His remaining eye is piercing and sharp, focused intently on the task at hand. Despite the cramped quarters of the workshop, the man moves with a grace and fluidity born of years of experience as a stone mason. His movements are deliberate, each strike of his hammer carefully calculated to bring out the best in the raw material before him.

As he works, dust and chips of stone fly up around him, catching in his beard and clinging to his clothes. But the man pays them little mind, fully absorbed in his craft and the task of turning the rough block of stone into a thing of beauty.

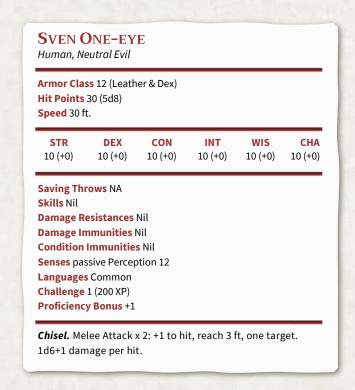


Area	Description
1	Sven's living space – sparsely adorned with a bed and desk. Equipment is stored behind a partial wall in the room.
2	Sven's workshop – blocks of stone and equipment here.  If searched, will find 3d6 gp.
3	Business room – where they conducted their nefarious dealings – just a table and chairs really.
4	Courtyard with statues.

Sven will seem very ill at ease with the characters and will try to get rid of them as quickly as possible. A passive perception roll

will detail how he keeps looking towards the stairs going down to the basement but is trying not to let that be obvious.

If the characters try to go down there, he will try to stop them.



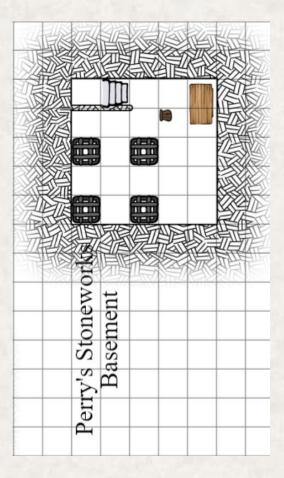
## 4.7. THE BOSS IN THE BASEMENT

Read this as the characters descend the stairs.

As you descend the steps below the stonemason's workshop, you notice a pretty, young girl with hazel eyes seated at a workbench. She seems lost in thought, her gaze fixed on the tools in front of her. You approach her, intending to ask for directions, but as you draw closer, you notice something strange about her. Her hair is not made of locks of silk or strands of gold, but rather small snakes, writhing and hissing as they slither across her shoulders and down her back.

You realize with a start that this pretty girl is no ordinary human, but a medusa. Despite the danger, you can't help but be struck by her beauty, the way her hazel eyes shine in the dim light of the workshop.

As she slowly looks up, her snakes hiss in unison, sensing your presence. You hold your breath, knowing the danger that comes with meeting a medusa's gaze.



The Medusa will attack, knowing that the characters have discovered her.

Once defeated (or during the battle if needed), the characters will notice 4 cages in the basement, 3 of which are occupied by one person each. Two of them will look young but in dirty but rich clothing – these are the nobles' sons that have gone missing. The other is just some poor commoner that was captured.

They will tell the characters that the Medusa would periodically turn one of them to stone and then they would grind that down together with some other substances to make the drug called Dryad Dust.

The keys to the cages can be found on the desk near where the Medusa was seated.

#### MEDUSA\*

Medium monstrosity, Lawful Evil

Armor Class 15 (Natural) Hit Points 87 (12d8 + 36) Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	СНА
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saving Throws NA** 

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Perception +4, Stealth +5

**Damage Resistances Nil** 

**Damage Immunities Nil** 

**Condition Immunities Nil** 

Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

**Proficiency Bonus +3** 

**Petrifying Gaze.** When a creature that can see the medusa's eyes starts its turn within 30 feet of the medusa, the medusa can force it to make a DC 14 Constitution saving throw if the medusa isn't incapacitated and can see the creature. If the saving throw fails by 5 or more, the creature is instantly petrified. Otherwise, a creature that fails the save begins to turn to stone and is restrained. The restrained creature must repeat the saving throw at the end of its next turn, becoming petrified on a failure or ending the effect on a success. The petrification lasts until the creature is freed by the greater restoration spell or other magic.

Unless surprised, a creature can avert its eyes to avoid the saving throw at the start of its turn. If the creature does so, it can't see the medusa until the start of its next turn, when it can avert its eyes again. If the creature looks at the medusa in the meantime, it must immediately make the save.

If the medusa sees itself reflected on a polished surface within 30 feet of it and in an area of bright light, the medusa is, due to its curse, affected by its own gaze.

**Multiattack.** The medusa makes either three melee attacksone with its snake hair and two with its shortsword--or two ranged attacks with its longbow.

**Snake Hair.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

**Shortsword.** Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

\* <u>Note</u> that the Medusa's hot points have been reduced to accommodate a lower level of characters within the module. Adjust as you see fit.

#### 5. EPILOGUE

Read the following when the characters release the prisoners and kill the boss.

Returning once again to the Leaf and Berry, Cade seems unusually happy – you've solved 2 problems for him, finding and destroying the source of the vile Dryad Dust, and locating the missing nobles' sons.

"A job well done I think and a bonus to boot! He says throwing some coin pouches in the table.

200gp extra as promised but also you can claim the Nobleman's reward." With this he places 4 sparkling gems on the table.

"I would say to use those wisely, but I think you'll do your own thing" he says with a wink, before taking his leave.

The gems are worth 400gp each.

## THE END

# NEW STREET DRUGS AND PEOPLE GOING MISSING — ARE THEY LINKED?

A new drug, "Dryad Dust" has hit the streets - it is highly addictive and dangerous.

Simultaneously, nobles and merchant's family members have gone missing. Are these two things related?

Your party have been commissioned to investigate this on behalf of the City Watch Captain as you may bring ... a certain set of skills and contacts needed to resolve this.

And – there's the pay off at the end – how can you say no?

A Dungeons & Dragons adventure for a party of 4 to 6, of 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> level characters.

